

Chapter 58

Entrepreneurial Skill Acquisition Priorities of Artisans in Cultural Tourism Destinations: A Contemporary Human Resource Development Approach

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this chapter is to identify entrepreneurial skill acquisition priorities of artisans and its dimensional orientation in cultural tourism destinations of India. The study adopted the exploratory sequential method, employed in-depth interview in qualitative stage, and structured questionnaire in the quantitative stage for primary data collection. Factor analysis was done for identifying dimensions of entrepreneurial skill acquisition priorities. Data gathered from three cultural tourism destinations of Andhra Pradesh, India. The results indicate that there are 17 indicators pertaining to entrepreneurial skill acquisition priorities, with three distinct dimensions consisting of (1) managerial skill, (2) initiating skill, and (3) destination-specific skill. This emphasizes that focus has to be given while imparting entrepreneurial training for artisan aspiring for grabbing cultural tourism opportunities. The study highlights the importance of framing broader strategies in skill development programs based on the destination-specific requirements of artisans for an inclusive growth, which may, in turn, meet the conservation and management needs of craft/artwork and also to expand economic opportunities in this informal sector.

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the emerging economic sectors of the world, contributing nearly 10% of the world gross domestic product (GDP), and creating one in ten jobs globally. In terms of exports, tourism ranked third in 2016 after fuel, chemicals, ahead of food and automobiles (UNWTO, 2014). Emerging and developing countries account for 45% of all international tourists arrivals, which is expected to reach 57% in 2030 (UNWTO, 2011a). In India, leisure travel spending both by inbound and domestic tourists generated 73.8% of direct travel and tourism GDP in 2011 as compared to business travel spending whose contribution is 26.2%. The same is expected to rise by 7.6% pa in 2022 for both leisure and business travel spending. Domestic travel spending has also generated almost 5 times more revenue than that of international tourism receipts (Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, 2013).

Handicrafts play a very important role in representing the culture and traditions of any country or region. Handicrafts are a substantial medium to preserve rich traditional art, heritage, and culture, traditional skills and talents which are associated with people's lifestyle and history. Handicrafts are hugely important in terms of economic development. They provide ample opportunities for employment even with low capital investments and become a prominent medium for foreign earnings.

UNESCO, UNCTAD, and WTO define artisanal products as those produced by artisans, either completely by the hand tool or even mechanical means; as long as the direct manual contribution of the artisans remains the most substantial component of the finished product. These are produced without restrictions in terms of quantity and using raw material from sustainable resources. The artisanal product is derived from their distinctive features, which can be utilitarian, artistic, creative, culturally attached, decorative, functional, traditional, religiously and socially symbolic and significant. (UNESCO, 2007). According to Dash (2011), handicrafts are the unique symbol of a particular community or culture through indigenous craftsmanship and material.

Indian task force on handicrafts, also defined handicrafts as the items made by hand, often with the use of simple tools, and generally artistic and/or traditional in nature., which include objects of utility and objects of decoration (Jena, 2008). As mentioned above, the tourist is always in search of something that is exotic and at the same time authentic to carry back as a memoir of his travel. Recent trends show that tourism earnings have come to rely more and more on the handicraft-craftsman component. According to UNWTO, tourists spend around 40 percent of their budget on souvenir purchases and other craft products (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005). Countries like Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia have explored these opportunities in large scale and made handicraft as one of the major components of the cultural tourism.

Tourists visiting India including visitation at cultural sites, spend a substantial amount on handicrafts. Every foreign tourist in India spends more than Rs 12,000 on Indian handicrafts. Tourists from the United Arab Emirates spend the most (Rs 28,376 on an average per person), followed by those from Saudi Arabia (Rs 26,955 per person) and Nigeria (Rs 25,073) and Ireland (Rs 24,687). According to a survey made by the National Productivity Council on behalf of the Government of India's Department of Tourism, silk products topped the shoppers' list, constituting 23 percent of the total expenditure on handicrafts followed by metal and jewelry, cotton textiles, wool textiles and leather products. The importance of this survey can be gauged from the fact that the total expenditure on handicrafts by all foreign tourists visiting India during 2002 is estimated to be Rs 28,781 million (Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, 2002).

As entrepreneurship development and economic development are very closely interrelated, providing entrepreneurial platforms for the artisan in the un-organized sector particularly in tourism sector

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